



CLARK COUNTY WASHINGTON

An update from your county commissioners

Summer/Fall 2005

BOARD OF CLARK COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



Betty Sue Morris, Chair
District 1



Marc Boldt
District 2



Steve Stuart
District 3

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Board of Clark County Commissioners
P.O. Box 5000
Vancouver, WA 98666-5000

Dear residents of Clark County:

It probably comes as no surprise that a high priority this fall continues to be the review of the county's comprehensive growth management plan. As a new board, we want to be sure that it is realistic in terms of how we grow, where we grow, and who pays for it.

Additional research has been conducted since the current plan was adopted in September 2004. We refined our modeling to give us a more accurate picture of land that can be built on. We asked the cities to tell us where they wanted to grow, and most of them requested more land than was included last September. We will be using this data and new in-depth revenue forecasts to help us reach our goal of a sensible plan.

More work and study will be needed as we do the necessary environmental analysis and capital facilities work. We can guarantee that these key components will be based on good, solid information.

With the input from the cities and from our citizens, we expect the outcome to be a truly excellent plan that successfully meets our community's needs in the years to come.

  
Betty Sue Morris, Chair Marc Boldt Steve Stuart

INSIDE: ■ Checking in on our future – Places to live and work
■ What's so critical about critical areas ■ Salmon Creek traffic
■ A source of valuable help for youth ■ Give your home a fighting chance

Checking in on our future

Places to live. Places to work. How many will we need? Where will they be?

To plan for people who will live here over the next two decades, Clark County has been reviewing key aspects of its comprehensive growth management plan, under the direction of the Board of Commissioners.

The commissioners are calling for a plan that allows for a total population of about 584,300 in 2024, compared with 391,500 as of April 2005, with enough jobs to allow a majority of the work force to earn a living in Clark County.

With new assumptions about population and employment, land use planners are studying existing urban areas, proposals from cities, requests from property owners, and areas previously considered for urban uses, to identify buildable lands. This research will determine how much land is available within these areas for homes and businesses.

After they learn the findings, the commissioners will craft a proposal for new urban growth areas and boundaries. ***When finalized, the new urban growth areas are expected to be significantly smaller than the area that is undergoing study.*** A draft county-wide land use map will illustrate the proposal.

Once the size and location of proposed urban areas are identified, the next step will be to evaluate environmental impacts and the potential cost of the investments needed to provide adequate roads, schools, and other public facilities. The overall goal is to plan as realistically as possible for the next generation.

Check out the maps.

Let us know what you think.

Please watch for news about where and when you can view the maps that will illustrate the areas being studied and the proposed urban growth boundaries. Then share your thoughts about how they may shape the future of our business and residential communities, before we finalize changes to the plan adopted in 2004.

There will be extensive opportunities for public involvement as the process moves forward. In addition to formal opportunities, you can provide your input at any time by sending written comments to:

Board of Clark County
Commissioners

P.O. Box 5000

Vancouver, WA 98666-5000

E-mail: boardcom@clark.wa.gov.



www.clark.wa.gov/longrangeplan/review/index.html
compplan@clark.wa.gov
(360) 397-2375 ext. 4993

What's so critical about critical areas?

Critical areas help protect our natural environment as we strive to meet the needs of a growing population. To comply with the state's Growth Management Act, Clark County's five Critical Areas Ordinances identify and protect wetlands, flood hazard areas, geologic hazard areas, fish and wildlife habitat, and critical aquifer recharge areas. This protection is important because critical areas enhance public health and safety by reducing the risks of erosion, landslides, and flooding. They also provide clean drinking water and recreation opportunities.

GMA requires that the ordinances be periodically reviewed and updated based on best available scientific information. Updates to the flood hazard, geohazard, and critical aquifer recharge areas ordinances have recently been adopted. As the wetlands and habitat ordinances are reviewed, the county commissioners are considering public input along with recommendations of the Endangered Species Act Advisory Committee.

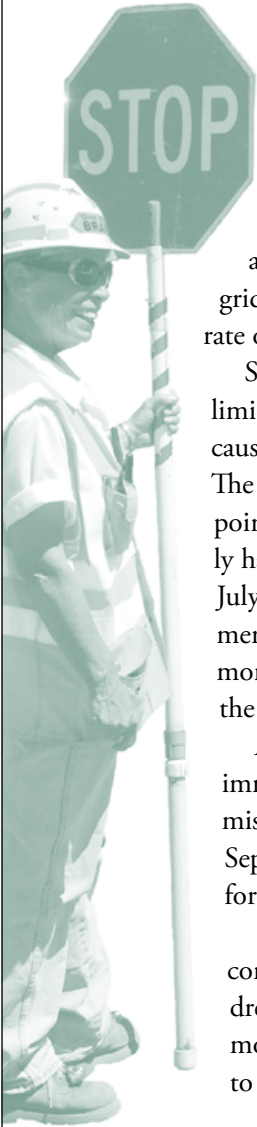


www.clark.wa.gov/longrangeplan/projects/critical-areas.html
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Salmon Creek traffic

Growth management, congestion, and its consequences



During the last 20 years, the population in Salmon Creek has grown significantly, with housing, retail, office space, a hospital, and a college campus replacing what used to be farmland and open space. Today the close proximity of traffic signals and high traffic volumes in this area create gridlock, long delays, traffic back-ups, and a high rate of automobile accidents.

State and county growth management laws limit development when resulting traffic would cause existing transportation facilities to fail. The county commissioners have determined that point has been reached—the area cannot currently handle any additional traffic. As a result, on July 26, the commissioners declared a development moratorium in the Salmon Creek area. No more building applications will be accepted until the moratorium is lifted.

Although the moratorium went into effect immediately as an emergency action, the commissioners have scheduled a public hearing for September 13 to receive public testimony and formally consider adoption of the moratorium.

As part of their July 26 action, the board committed to establishing a work plan that addresses the transportation issues in the area. The moratorium gives the county the opportunity to require greater participation from the private

sector in solving the problems. Public-private partnerships will be crucial to producing the infrastructure that the area needs for long-term growth.



www.clark.wa.gov/commdev/development/salmoncreek-dev.html
 Evan.Dust@clark.wa.gov
 (360) 397-2375 ext. 4913

Salmon Creek Interchange Project

There is no quick fix to the traffic safety and mobility problems in Salmon Creek. However, in the long-term, a proposed project that is a joint effort of Clark County and the Washington State Department of Transportation would improve conditions and allow for continued growth. When completed, the proposed project would:

- **Connect NE 139th Street** between NE 10th Avenue and NE 20th Avenue across I-5
- **Construct a new full interchange at I-5** and NE 139th Street
- **Widen NE 10th Avenue** from NE 134th Street to NE 149th Street
- **Redesign access to I-205 southbound** from NE 134th Street

For more information, please call Kristin Hull toll-free at (877) 624-7196, send e-mail to info@salmoncreekinterchange.org, or visit the project Web site at www.salmoncreekinterchange.org.

A source of valuable help for youth

"Kids need someone to talk to and they can't always count on friends or parents," says volunteer Brandi Van Laeken. "TeenTalk is one place where kids can talk about any problem."

This nationally recognized mental health outreach program was created from information gathered by the county's Youth Suicide Prevention Task Force. Youth who were interviewed spoke about the importance of having someone in their peer group to talk with about difficult issues.

TeenTalk is staffed by youth volunteers who receive 32 hours of training, then answer phones and instant messages sent to ccteentalk1@AOL, MSN, or Yahoo. *Know a teen who needs to hear from a peer who cares?* Provide their name and address, and TeenTalk volunteers will be pleased to send them an information pack.



www.ccteentalk1.clark.wa.gov
ccteentalk1@hotmail.com
 (360) 397-CHAT (2438)





Give your home a fighting chance

“Typically, the period from late summer to early fall is one of the driest times of the year,” says Fire Marshal Jon Dunaway. “The chance is high for wildfires, which are fast moving and very dangerous.”

In rural areas, all vegetation is potential wildfire fuel. One of the best ways to give your home a fighting chance is to create a “defensible space” around it – a 30-foot area where vegetation has been removed or modified to be fire resistant. “During a wildfire emergency, you and your family should be ready to evacuate immediately to an area of safety,” Dunaway adds.

Whether you live in a rural or urban area, here are some other things you can do:

- ***Make sure fire vehicles can get to your home.*** Cut back tree limbs so they are at least 13.5 feet above the ground, and clearly mark all driveway entrances with your address.
- ***Teach children about fire safety*** and keep matches out of reach.
- ***Where allowed, obtain required burning permits*** and never leave a fire unattended.
- ***Develop an evacuation plan for your family,*** including escape routes by car and by foot.

“Take action now” says Dunaway, “before your house or neighborhood is threatened by fire.”



[www.clark.wa.gov/commdev/
firemarshal/wildfire-
protection.html](http://www.clark.wa.gov/commdev/firemarshal/wildfire-protection.html)
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proud past, promising future

CLARK COUNTY
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